

TODDLERS

OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND ADULT LICENSING



STATE OF MICHIGAN
Department of Human Services

www.michigan.gov/dhs

WHAT ARE TODDLERS LIKE?

Welcome to the toddlers' world! By 18 months these children have left infancy. Many changes are about to happen. The days when gentle, helpless infants could play quietly in the crib are gone! Sturdy legs now move quickly. Arms reach out, and hands are fast to grab.

Everything seems attractive and worth touching, smiling, and tasting. Breakable and poisonous things must be put away. Doors may need to be locked and the yard fenced.



Independent? Yes. But your toddlers need you more than ever – maybe to be helped down the steps or to point out interesting sights on a walk. Toddlers are full of energy. Having them around is lots of fun. But the job is not always easy. These “bossy” youngsters say “no” most of the time and sometimes will not easily share with other children. This is all part of growing up.



For toddlers, the new push car is easy to ride, but bumping into the furniture or the wall is hard to avoid. The children are eager to explain what happened, but words will not come easily. Unfamiliar places seem attractive, but sometimes scary. Toddlers need your help and understanding. Listen to the new words, answer the many questions, praise them often, and always smile. These active, energetic and curious children will grow best in a home that offers love and security.

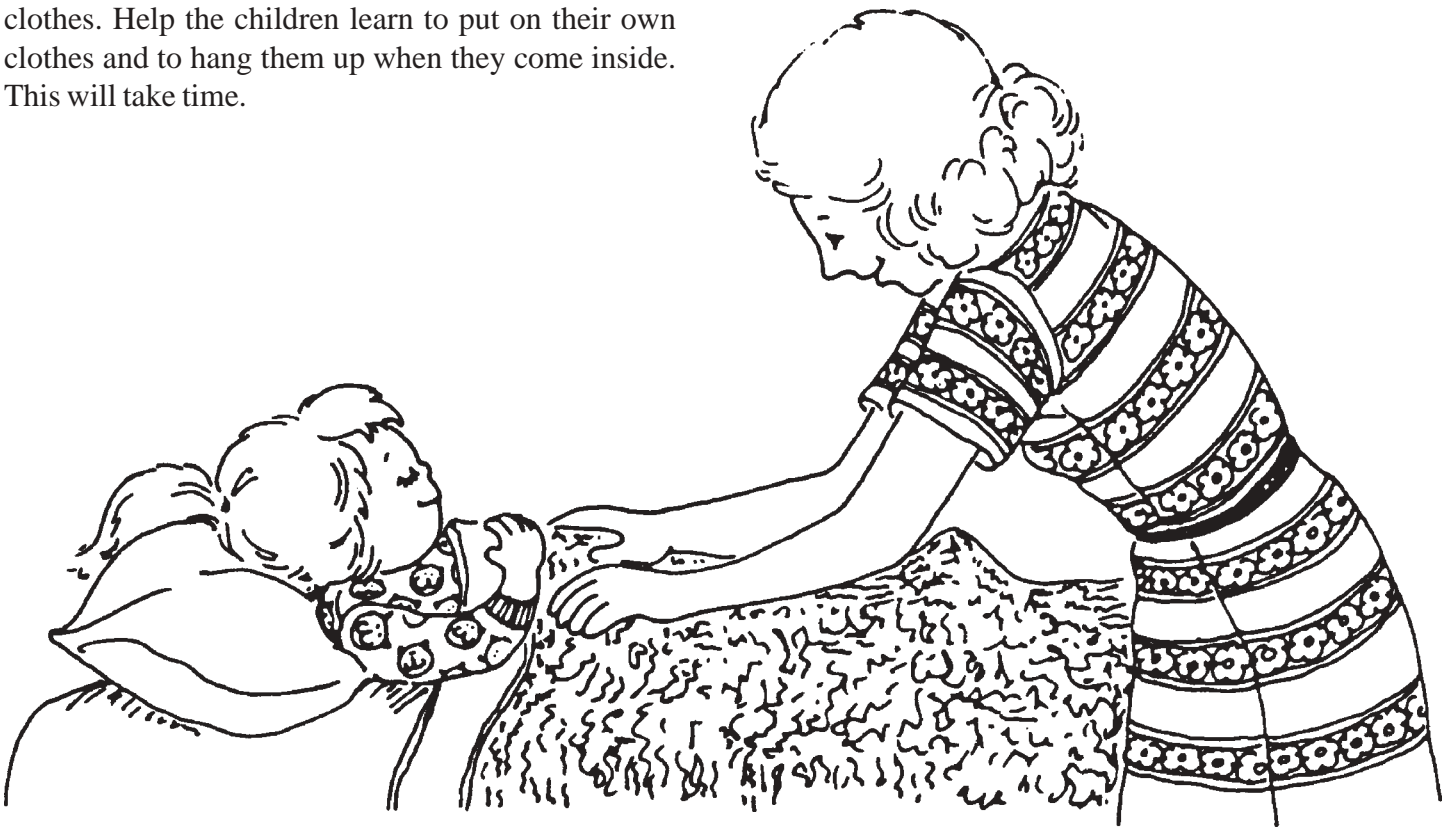


Toddlers are ready for field trips – short visits outside the home. They enjoy a walk in the woods or a visit to the neighbor or the grocery store. But remember, always stay close. Even though toddlers may try to wander, they count on you more than ever when they are in a strange place.



Toddlers need daily naps. Make this part of the daily routine. Help the children settle down; tuck them in, sing a lullaby, and keep the rest area quiet. Remind each child of something special he or she did during the day.

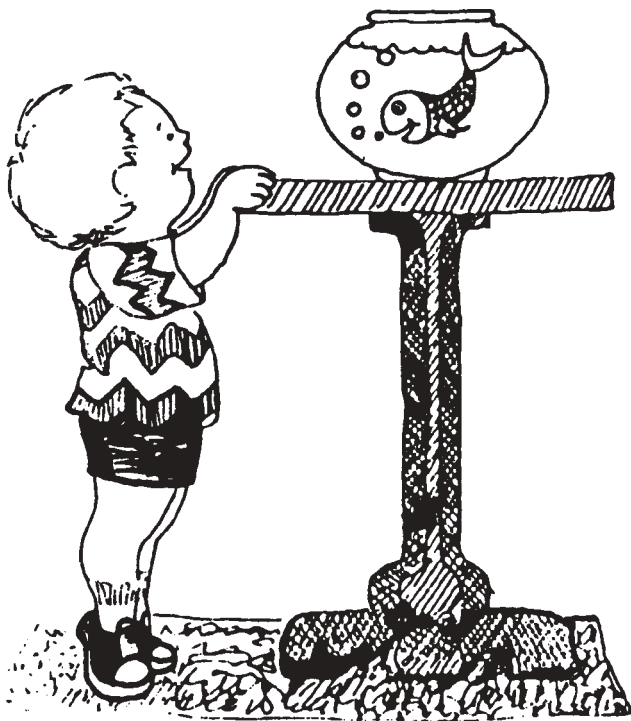
When children are healthy, they should play outside each day. Outside play is a good time for you to talk and play freely with the children. When it gets cold, you may need to remind parents to send warmer clothes. Help the children learn to put on their own clothes and to hang them up when they come inside. This will take time.



WHAT CAN TODDLERS DO?

Since toddlerhood is a time of so much growth and development, it may be difficult to keep in mind what to expect and when to expect it. Growth takes place in four main areas:

1. Sensory-Motor Development,
2. Language Development,
3. Social-Personal Development,
- and
4. Cognitive Development.



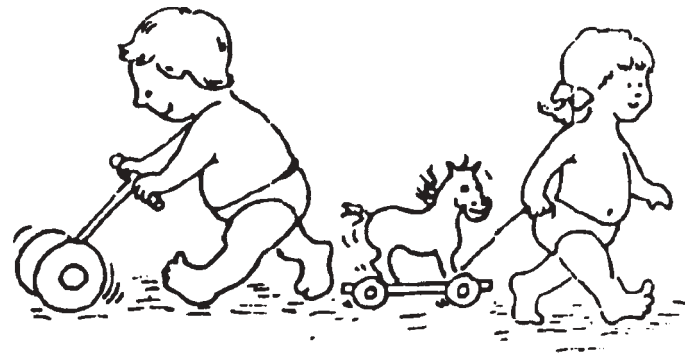
SENSORY-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

Sensory-Motor development is the change in the way children use their muscles to move around and do things. There are two kinds of muscles. Large muscles are used for such things as walking and bending. Small muscles

are used for pointing and picking up things. Children also use their muscles as they learn to take care of themselves. This is called self-help.

SOCIAL-PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social-personal development includes the children's growing awareness of themselves, how they feel about children and adults, and how they play and talk to others.



COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cognitive development is the growing ability to listen, understand others and follow directions. This area also includes the way children think, reason, and solve problems.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language development is the children's growing ability to listen, understand, and use words to express themselves.

18-24 MONTHS

SENSORY-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

SMALL MUSCLES

18-24 Months. Toddlers should be able to:

1. scribble using one hand more than the other,
2. build a tower of three blocks after an adult shows how it can be done,
3. begin to turn pages in a book,
4. point to an object after hearing its name, and
5. fill a container with objects such as rocks.



LARGE MUSCLES

18-24 Months. Toddlers should be able to:

1. walk and run without falling,
2. carry a large toy while walking,
3. stand on one foot with some help,
4. bend down without falling,
5. respond to music by swaying,
6. push and pull large toys,
7. climb and sit in a chair,
8. reach for a large rolling ball,
9. walk up steps without help, and
10. walk backwards.

SELF-HELP

18-24 Months. Toddlers should be able to:

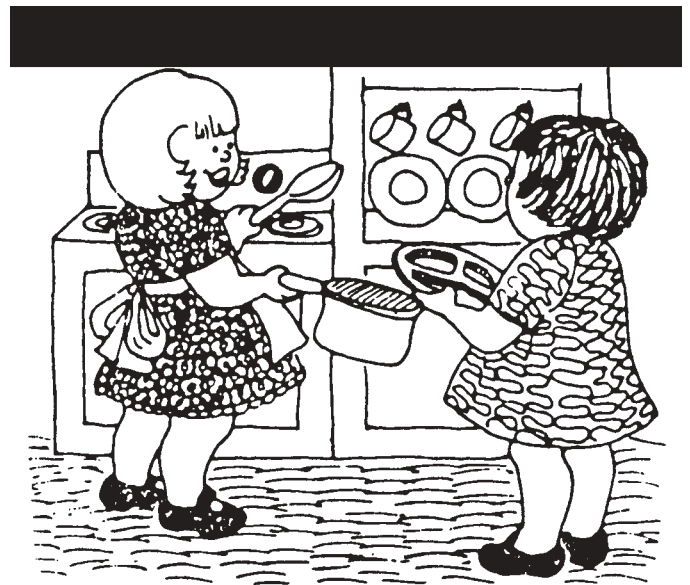
1. let you know when they are wet or soiled,

2. use the toilet when placed on it-sometimes,
3. chew solid foods,
4. hold a small cup with one hand,
5. drink without much spilling,
6. use a spoon, and
7. wash the front of their own bodies.

SOCIAL-PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

18-24 Months. Toddlers may:

1. still fear being separated from an adult and may develop other fears such as fear of the dark,
2. be shy,
3. show affection,
4. be independent at times and dependent on you at other times,
5. not be able to make decision,
6. often say “no” and do the opposite of what they are told,
7. slap, kick, or bite,
8. play house, put dolls to bed or feed dolls,
9. play beside other children but may not share easily,
10. pull on adults to show them something, and
11. ask for food or drink using gestures or words.



18-24 MONTHS

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

18-24 Months. Toddlers now:

1. can find hidden objects by following simple directions,
2. try to find out about things by touching, smelling, or tasting,
3. are able to find new ways to use objects such as a spoon and a shovel,
4. are able to fill a box or a can with objects,
5. look at a picture book alone,
6. can name familiar objects,
7. recognize familiar sounds, such as horn, car, animal noises, or voices,
8. can understand more words than they can use,

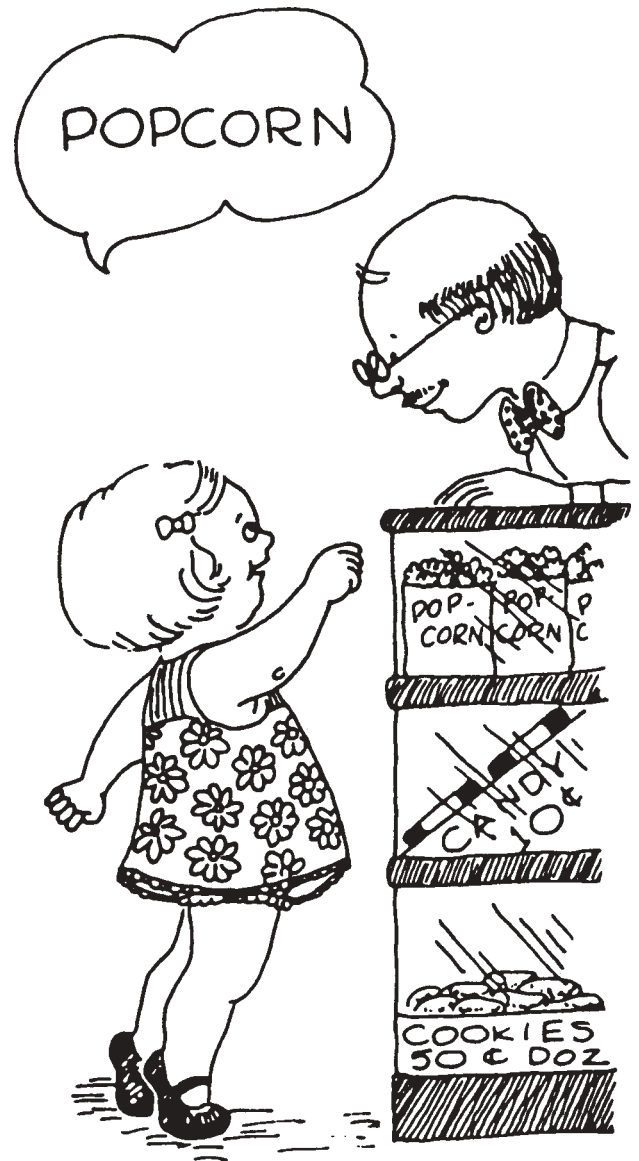


9. may be unhappy about mother leaving, but can understand she will come back,
10. can recognize themselves in a mirror,
11. point to a familiar object after hearing its name, and
12. point to body parts on a doll.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

18-24 Months. Toddlers can now:

1. say sounds used by others to name objects,



2. repeat simple two to three word phrases such as "Mommy go bye-bye,"
3. ask for what they want by name such as some food or toys,
4. put two different words together more often such as "big dog,"
5. sing along with others,
6. may ask simple questions,
7. follow simple commands when you see actions rather than words, and
8. point to familiar objects after hearing the names.

24-36 MONTHS

SENSORY-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

SMALL MUSCLES

24-36 Months. By this time toddlers can:

1. use crayons holding them by the fingers to make simple lines,
2. build a seven to ten block tower,
3. turn pages one at a time,
4. remove paper wrappings from small objects, and
5. string long beads.

LARGE MUSCLES

24-36 Months. By this time toddlers can:

1. stop, start, and change directions while walking,
2. walk on tiptoes,
3. jump on both feet,
4. squat without falling,
5. stand from a squat without using hands to push up,
6. kick a large ball,
7. throw a small ball without falling,
8. push and steer a toy,
9. paint with a small brush, and
10. run.

SELF-HELP

24-36 Months. By this time toddlers can:

1. usually stay dry all night,
2. pull down their pants, but may need help pulling them up,
3. unzip clothes,
4. pull on simple clothes,
5. take off clothes,
6. wash and dry their hands,
7. comb and brush hair,
8. help put things away,
9. use a fork or spoon to eat, and
10. pour from a pitcher, but may still spill.

SOCIAL-PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

24-36 Months. Now toddlers can:

1. have a sense of humor, enjoy surprises and play tricks,
2. be easily frustrated and show anger by throwing objects on the floor,
3. be proud of their work,
4. protect their won things from others,
5. enjoy doing the same things over and over again and may resist changes,



6. begin to imitate adults,
7. be constantly active,
8. explore and touch everything possible,
9. refer to themselves as “I” or “me” and refer to others as “you,”
10. watch other children playing and sometimes will join them for a few minutes,
11. help put their own things away, and
12. start an activity after the suggestion is made.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

24-36 Months. Toddlers now:

1. take simple objects apart and put them back together,
2. remember where many things are kept and how to get to them,

3. can learn from experience and remember what has happened before,
4. name parts of the body of an animal, person, or themselves,
5. know what body parts are used for,
6. understand the meaning of the word “another,”



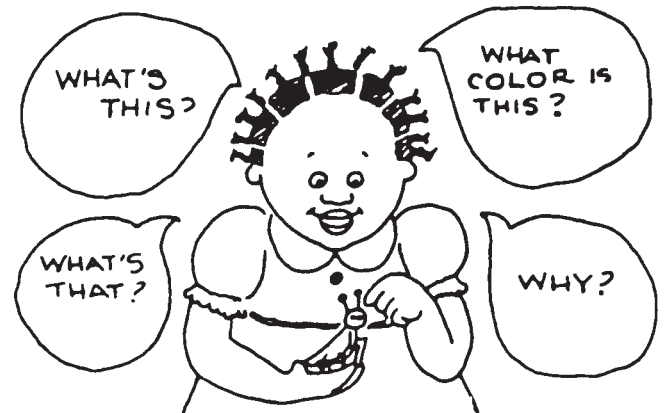
7. know what they can eat and what they should not,
8. know what some objects are used for,
9. can match colors, sizes, shapes or textures,
10. recognize themselves and familiar adults in snapshots,
11. can make simple choices,
12. can tell you whether another child is a boy or girl, and
13. understand “how many” or “two.”

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

24-36 Months. At this time, toddlers may:

1. use simple three-word sentences such as “See Daddy coming,”
2. say their full name including nickname,
3. use words to show they are happy, sad, or angry,

4. often talk to themselves while playing,
5. begin to use plurals of words,
6. listen to and memorize simple nursery rhymes,
7. ask many questions,
8. make their voices soft and loud,
9. use “I,” “me,” or “my” to refer to himself or herself,
10. use “you” and “your” to refer to others, and
11. follow simple directions.



EARLY WARNING SIGNS

WATCH FOR WARNING SIGNS

You have seen that toddlerhood is an age of change, of mobbing from a helpless infant into the active world of the toddler. This stage has many ups and downs. Each child grows at his or her own special rate. Expect a wide range of development among these growing toddlers. However, serious problems can arise at this age. You must know the “warning signs” of these problems. Early treatment of certain needs may help the child’s growth and development.

Whenever a child seems to be progressing more slowly than others, don’t alarm parents, but do tell them. They in turn, can seek professional advice. Maybe the child does need help. Maybe, however, it is simply that his or her style is different.

Some troublesome behavior may be caused by a physical need. The following lists will help you look for these “warning signs” of problems that may need further care.

PHYSICAL NEEDS

Some children are much clumsier than others. This may be a sign of problems involving control of the body. You should tell the parents about these problems before they become more serious. **In case of sickness or an accident, don’t wait. Notify the parents and get a doctor’s help as soon as possible.** Here are signs to watch for:



1. The child has trouble controlling his or her arms or legs.
2. The child falls a lot and walks poorly, or can’t walk at all by 2 ½ years.
3. The child holds one hand at his or her side and never uses it for picking up or holding toys.
4. The child’s arms, legs or neck may be stiff and hard to move.
5. The child drools all the time.
6. The child may sleep a lot during the day.
7. The child often faints, wets or soils pants even though toilet-trained, lies on the floor with arms and legs stiff, and then jerks them around with the back arched. The child will sleep deeply afterwards.

TALK TO THE PARENTS

There may be other signs of problems which need medical help as soon as possible:

1. infected cuts or bites that have swelling or a white look around them for more than three days,
2. many skin rashes, lumps, or sores,
3. throwing up and high fevers that last for a long time,
4. refusing to eat for three days or more,
5. constant coughing,
6. continual diarrhea,
7. unusual paleness and coldness of the skin,

8. if a child falls and hits his or her head, watch for these signs:

dizziness,
headache,
throwing up,
sleepiness, or
wetting.

If you see a combination of these signs, call the doctor right away. Allow the child to rest quietly or sleep. Check the child every half hour.

GET A DOCTOR'S HELP

SIGHT NEEDS



If the child has poor eyesight, these are some of the signs. You should talk them over with the parents.

1. The child doesn't try to find out about things nearby.
2. The child often bumps into objects.
3. The child's eyes are often crusty, red and watery.
4. The child squints or holds objects close to see them. The child rolls his or her eyes around, is cross-eyed or doesn't use both eyes to follow objects.
5. The child doesn't point to or wave back to others or doesn't imitate someone else's body movements.
6. The child doesn't look at colorful, eye-catching objects.
7. The child often waves fingers of front of his or her eyes.
8. The child often rubs his or her eyes.
9. The child complains of itching or burning eyes.
10. The child complains of headaches or dizziness frequently.

HEARING NEEDS

Sometimes when a child is cranky and does not pay attention, it may be because of a hearing problem. Here are some of the signs of a child who has trouble hearing.

1. The child doesn't talk.
2. The child doesn't follow directions or doesn't react to loud sounds when his or her back is turned.
3. The child doesn't come when called.
4. The child had many earaches or has a runny fluid coming from the ear.



5. The child has little voice control. He or she screams a lot or makes strange sounds.
6. The child bumps his or her head on the pillow in bed to go to sleep at night.

LEARNING NEEDS

Some children learn more slowly than others and need special help. Here are some things to look for.

SOME LEARN MORE SLOWLY THAN OTHERS

1. The child doesn't walk or talk by three years of age.
2. The child has trouble understanding or remembering simple directions.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS

3. The child has trouble doing many sensory-motor skills, especially those skills which require eye-hand coordination, (activities using the eyes and small muscles such as scribbling on paper with a crayon).

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR

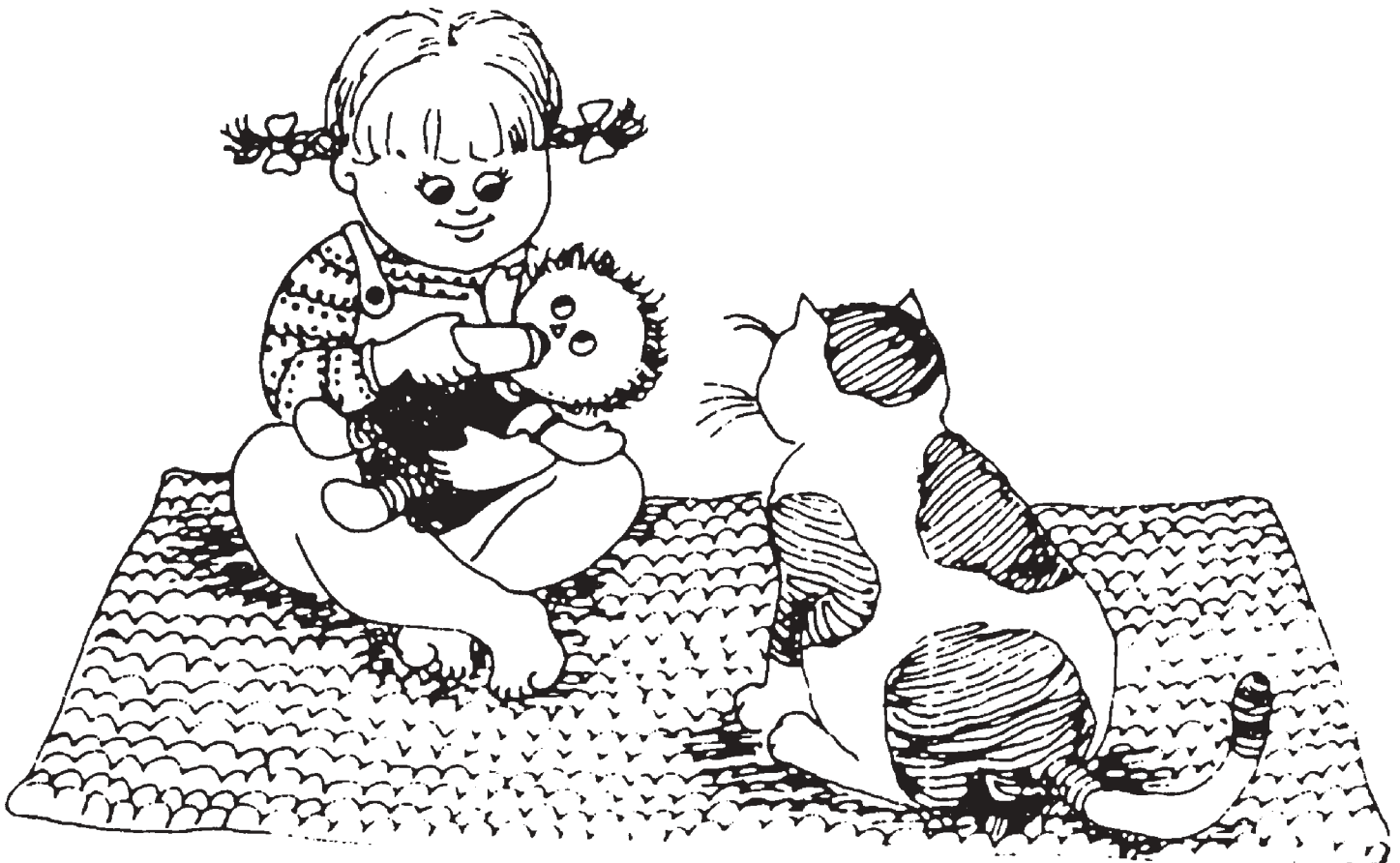
When a child is upset, he or she may hit, cry, bite, or kick. But when the child does these things most of the time, something may be wrong.

EMOTIONAL NEEDS

1. The child often cries without a reason.
2. The child never plays with other children and prefers to be left alone in the corner or in a playpen.
3. The child doesn't seem to enjoy being held or touched.

4. The child often hurts his or her own body by hitting or biting.
5. The child constantly rocks back and forth and makes funny noises.
6. The child does the same movement over and over such as waves the arms and legs.
7. The child suddenly changes his or her behavior.
8. The child says the same thing over and over or only repeats words after hearing them from another person.

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